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(12/10/05)

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## **Humane Society of Berks County Seeks a “Home for the Holidays” for Canine Katrina Refugee**

The Humane Society of Berks County, Berks County’s leader in animal welfare, announced today that it was seeking a new home for “Pepper”, one of the canine refugees of Hurricane Katrina. “After the terrible circumstances endured by Pepper during and after Hurricane Katrina, we hope to find her a safe, new home,” said Humane Society executive director, Karel I. Minor.

Pepper was one of four dogs relocated to Berks County when emergency animal shelters on the Gulf Coast shut down in the weeks following Katrina’s devastation. Volunteers and staff of the HSBC, assisting with rescue efforts in the hurricane zone, transported the dogs back to the HSBC’s Reading shelter. Of the four dogs, Pepper is the last in need of a home. The owner of one of the dogs, Roscoe, was found and will soon be reunited with his pet. Another extremely young puppy, Nico, was placed in a foster home immediately after arriving in Berks County and was later adopted. Pepper’s companion, Belle, was discovered to have cancerous growths during routine sterilization surgery and was euthanized. “So far, two of the four dogs have gotten happy outcomes,” said Minor. “We’d like to be able to do the same for Pepper, particularly in light of the tragedy that befell her friend.”

The Humane Society of Berks County will be accepting adoption applications for Pepper at its 11<sup>th</sup> Street shelter, which is open seven days a week. Applications will be very carefully screened in order to ensure the best possible placement. According to Minor, “Pepper has been through a lot. Losing first her home and then her companion has been very stressful. We want to make sure she gets into the perfect situation for her.”

All of the dogs were housed under the HSBC’s PetNet Emergency Animal Housing Program. This program provides temporary emergency housing for pets of the victims of personal or community catastrophes, domestic violence, or major illness. PetNet is also a component of the newly formed Berks County Animal Response Team (CART) for which HSBC executive director, Karel Minor, is County Coordinator. The Humane Society of Berks County is the lead county agency for the newly formed Berks CART and is directing the formation of the program and registration of volunteers. As the **only** animal welfare agency involved in the development of Berks CART, HSBC is seeking volunteers and support. “We’re proud that we were able to step up and take this vital project on and we welcome those interested in helping to protect our animal companions from danger,” said Minor.

For more information about Berks CART, volunteer and support opportunities, or for adoption information for Pepper or any of the other wonderful animals available this holiday season, go to [www.berkshumane.org](http://www.berkshumane.org) or call 610-921-2348.

The Humane Society of Berks County serves all of Berks County and surrounding communities. It is a private, non-profit organization funded through donations and service fees. In addition to enforcing Pennsylvania’s animal cruelty laws, the Humane Society offers adoption services, spay and neuter services, humane education, pet behavioral counseling, and helps stray, injured and mistreated animals. The Humane Society is located at 1801 N. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Reading.

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